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MUSIC AND MEMORY

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MUSIC AND MEMORY

and Other Poems

HELEN E. WIEAND

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TO

MY MOTHER

WHOSE LIFE IS NOW A MEMORY
WITHIN MY HEART, WHOSE
LOVE IS MUSIC

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MUSIC

Ah, Music, it were well
That once again you weave your magic spell
About me, for the days had been too sad
To be made glad
By such as you!
Yea, the daughters of Music had been brought so low;
The depths of woe
Yawned bleak before me and I could not bear
The sound of joy. 'Twere well now just to share
Your sombre notes, your aching, longing cry,
To make my yearning heart at last reply
And say, "'Tis well." Though she be gone away
She would not have me mourn for her alway.
But she would have me gather in my hands
The gay and happy strands
Which made her life so full, and carry on
Her work that none of it be left undone.
And with those threads of work and love and joy
Is mingled yours, sweet Music, to employ
My time within the waiting days to be
With love and work and joy and melody.
So, Music, weave again your magic spell
Until I answer clearly, "It is well!"

THE SPELL OF MUSIC

Ah! woo my heart, my thoughts, away,
  Music so sweet and sad!
Dark is my mood and ever the day
All of one cold and wistful gray;
  Music, sing sweet, sing glad!

One of my long, long thoughts is pain;
  Music, sing it to peace!
One is the sorrow that all in vain
Mourns for the past to return again;
  Music, sing it surcease!

One is regret for things undone;
  Music, make me forget!
And oh, the victories I had won
Had I but curbed the angry tone!
  Music, sing sweeter yet!

Sing me release from weariness;
  Music, sing soft and low!
And oh, the dark, cold dreariness
Of love denied that had come to bless!
  Sing to dispel that woe.

Sing till the gray turns silver bright;
  Music, weave now your spell!
Banish the pain and the wrong make right;
Sing till my heart both day and night
  Makes answer, "Yea — all is well."

THE MASTER PLAYS

The master touched the strings and music poured
  Like cooling streams upon my fevered brain
  To soothe the longing and the weary strain
By each deep, thrilling, soulful, minor chord;
Grief spoke through all the yearning music stored
  Within the throbbing instrument again,—
  But grief ennobled, purified of pain,
At peace, with all life's plans in sweet accord.

As master and the instrument so blend,
  Each complementing each, a perfect one,
So grief is but the instrument to lend
  To love's all-mastering touch to play upon.
And oh, my heart, be still, be calm, be blest!
The song is theirs who from their labors rest.

MEMORY

Between this world and that far unkown land
  Where you are now there lies a vast gray sea,
  Unspanned save by the bridge of memory;
And there with those gone thitherward you stand,
Invisible, with eager outstretched hand,
  Yearning to reach, to speak, to come to me,
  Just as of yore, with loving sympathy,
Ready to meet my uttermost demand.

How do I know? Ah! through the silent gray
  Of twilight, as I sat here all alone,
I felt your hand upon my head today;
  I heard the silver-cadenced undertone

Of your voice calling, as of old, and knew
That my heart's call had pierced the mists to you.

LONELINESS

I

I never knew, till I had lost you,
Loneliness.
I never dreamed how brightly gleamed
Love's happiness,
Till shadows fell. Misunderstandings? Well!
'Twould be no less
Than I should bear, so having failed you, dear,—
Heart-weariness.

We never know,— alas! that it is so! —
Nor clear discern
Love's perfect worth, how fair it makes the earth,
Until some turn
Of bitter fate reveals it; then, too late,
Our sad hearts yearn
In weariness, in aching dreariness,
For love's return.

II

Deep silence filled with the half-voiced sounds
Of a house alone in the night,
And I try to read, to still the beat
Of my heart-voice raised in fright.

The clock ticks on, but its voice sounds sad,
As if lonely too like me,

As if waiting for your voice to sound,
To make our voices three.

Your chair creaks sudden and I start up,
All unnerved by the loneliness,
And I pray to God, as I try to sleep,
All lonely hearts to bless.

MY BELOVED IS NEAR

Translation from Goethe

I think of you when golden sunlight shimmers
Upon the sea;
I think of you when moonlight softly glimmers
Across the lea.

I see you when on far-off mountain-ridges
The dry dusts rise;
In darkness drear, when o'er uncertain bridges
My journey lies.

I hear you when the rolling storm-sea surges
With troubled moan;
Or when in quiet groves my mood swift urges
Me far to roam.

I am with you and though you're far away
Still you are near;
The sun sets, soon the stars will close the day;
Would you were here!

"NUR WER DIE SEHNSUCHT KENNT"

The waiting ended; — and for you the peace,
The great release
From all the weariness and all the pain;
But oh! for me such longing as were fain
To tear my heart in twain.

For you 'tis ended, but for me still waiting,
Anticipating
Some call from you, some little loving word
As those you spake when here; and something stirred
To make me dream I heard.

How can I bear the severance? None can say
Nor soothe away
The aching pain, the longing but to know
That you still linger very near to show
Your love for us in woe.

Only the spirits of the blest who yearn
Can clear discern
The longing of the hearts torn sad like mine
And with a healing touch almost divine
Can soothe away the sorrow and the pain,
Not by the wish to dwell on earth again
But with the full assurance that in time
The great sublime
Transition will be consummated too
For us who still are waiting. Just a few,
A very few more days to bear the woe,
The longing here below;
Then I shall be with you again, my dear.
My Dear!

THE GUARDIAN ANGEL

As she from that far shore looks hitherward,
And sees the gray dark ocean thou must cross,
Her loving care, feel sure, will ever guard
And keep thy fragile bark from wreck or loss.

Feel sure her intercession will but gain
A journey safe for thee, till side by side
Ye stand, forgetting all the bitter pain
And grief of years apart,— full-satisfied.

THE EMPTY HOUSE

Are these long days since they have gone away
To you all-purposeless, all-weary, gray?
Or are they days of happy memory
Wherein you seem to hear again and see
Those loved ones whom you sheltered glad, of yore?
None enter now through your once welcoming door;
Closed all the windows, once so widely spread;
Cold all the hearth-stones, all the fires are dead.
Robbed of your joy you stand there heavy-hearted,
Waiting — but nevermore will those departed
Throw open wide again your doors. Alone —
Waiting — but those you sheltered all are gone.

SEPARATION

You never dreamed, ah! never could have dreamed
That all these days such loneliness could steal
Over my heart, all else to make unreal,
Mere phantoms of a world that once had seemed
A place where golden sunshine brightly streamed
From cloudless skies of happiness. Appeal
To you I cannot. Wherefore thus reveal
Such desolation that I once had deemed
Possible only in the depths of woe?
Wherefore should I such torture undergo?
Only to suit your pleasure? Nay, I will
Now and forever claim my freedom, till
Steadfast and strong my soul may sternly say
Farewell to you and sadly go its way.

THE ARTIST

Just to create and though it be but small,
One song, one picture, or one poem meet
To speak in new-found words the urgent call
My heart speaks, deep, sincere. Just to complete
By one small gift the world's created store
Of knowledge or of sweetness or of pain,
Aye, even pain, so that one gift the more
Some other mind may make to soothe the strain.

Need not to ask what gift there is in me,
What tool the Master-workman has bestowed
Fit for the task; for all-impellingly
Stirs in my heart and soul the urgent goad,
Zestful and eager something to create,
And at the end His word, "Well-done!" await.

THE END OF THE DAY

Each task completed, now the time for thoughts,
For brief regret
That the day which dawned so golden
Has failed; — or was it we who failed
To keep and hold
That golden freshness of the morn?
To pour into each task its magic zest,
To turn our work — God's gift for happiness —
No curse of Kismet —
Into a great achievement?
Thoughts
Of all the happiness we might have given,
A smile, a friendly word, a kiss,
To make the day more sweet.
Only a restless striving,
A weak endeavor;
And now at the end of the day
Thoughts.
The purple gray of the after-sunset,
The regret for the left-undone,
The sorrow for the base, the weakly-done;
But one bright golden gleam
Of sunlight — hope
That God who seeth all and knoweth all
May gather these our thoughts up with our deeds,
Balance them in His perfect scale and find
One golden grain for which to bless us,
At the end of the day.

THE GREAT WAR

I. Tragedy.
II. Hope.
III. The End.

I.

TRAGEDY

Oh, tragedy! oh, curse of all the years!
  The women all the women,
Mid dangers, hates and fears,
  Cursing even God's heaven
That heedeth not their tears.—
The tragedy of years.

Oh, tragedy! oh, anguish of the years!
  Children in all their weakness,
Not understanding tears,
  Bewildered by death and bleakness,
Calling,— and no one hears.—
The anguish of the years.

Oh. tragedy! oh, sorrow of the years!
  The wounded and the dying,
And oh! the heedless ears
  Of the dead, uncared-for lying!
Oh, sight for angels' tears!
The sorrow of the years.

II

HOPE

Behind this scourging war and all the grim
  Sad desolation of a smiling land,
Can eyes of faith see that which now is dim
  And blurred, some right all clearly, justly planned?
Can eyes of hope see waving fields of grain
  Where now are mounds piled high, concealing death?
Can hearts of love e'er rise and love again
  Those whom in hate they cursed, with cannons' breath?

Not His the plan; 'tis men who went astray
  And spread this horror, lusting fierce with hate;
Perchance to grope through blindness to the way
  Of mercy, truth and justice, though so late.
O God of all, *Thine own plan now reveal,*
  All war to end, all bitter strife to heal.

III

THE END

After the din of war
  Has died away,
  At close of day
Lo! shines the evening-star.

After the bloody strife
  Has come to end,
  The heart of a friend
Keep for the rest of life.

After the fearful dream
  Is quite forgot,
  'Twill be our lot
Really to live, not seem.

"THE WHITE COMRADE"

"By what vision led go ye forth?
Not a poet's dreams
Had such power to lure you on to die.
What then? Ah! Meseems
'Tis some awful message from on high.
By what vision led go ye forth?"

"In the ranks today, by our side,
On to battle led,
A new comrade strode; in his hand
Was a wound blood-red.
But he dared to march, dared to stand
In the ranks today, by our side."

"'Wounded, friend?' we asked. Sad he smiled.
'Yea, but 'tis not new.
Once a Roman nail pierced me there;
But it bleeds anew.'
Thrilled we heard, then rushed forth to dare,
Lest again that hand be defiled."

"By that sign we go forth to die;
By that Holy Cross;
Strengthened by that brave Comrade near,
Neither death nor loss
Nor defeat can cause us to fear.
God has sent His vision from on high."

THE ANGEL OF PEACE

Aloft through the gray lowering sky
Shalt thou soar, shalt thou fly;
For the wings of thy spirit are spreading, all eager to go;
All eager to speed through the air
Thy buoyant message to bear
To the hearts that are drooping in sorrow, in anguish and woe.

Oh, the wings of thy spirit are swift,
All-puissant to lift
And to bear thee sure, glad, on thy songful, triumphant, far quest;
Thy one wing is faith, and glad joy
Is the other, prepared to convoy
Thee swift as thou goest to answer and heed the behest!

Ah, haste, then, glad Spirit, full speed
To the sorrowing world in its need;
For 'tis faith that the world needs, 'tis joy, and most is it love;
And ah! thy glad message far fling it,
Through all the wide heavens loud sing it,
Till all hearts receiving endeavor its dictates to prove.

Oh, speed thee, glad Spirit, all haste!
Not one moment to waste;
Today is alone thine to use and to claim for thy will;
Like flame of a wind-fanned fire
Rise higher, gladly, and higher;
And speak through the wind or the storm, or the voice small and still.

Speak low or triumphantly speak,
Wingéd words swift to seek
The hearts that need most the glad message thou speedest to bring;
And oh, may the world far and near
Be eager and ready to hear!
For thou art His messenger, Peace, with commands from the King.

With a sword that is flashing, keen, bright,
Edged with truth and with right,
Thou art sent to proclaim His decree that cruel wars shall cease;
And Justice with Mercy shall blend
Till, wars at an end,
All declare Him the King of the world, the great Prince of Peace.

TO THE POET ON READING HIS BOOK

As is the flickering light of candle-flame
  Compared with the sure radiance of a star;
  Or as the feeble note of trumpet, far
Outechoed by the thunder; aye, the same,
My little songs before thine suffer shame
  That they should dare to sound their notes, which are
  Like jangling notes rung out of tune, to mar
The music of the words that bear thy name.

Abashed I stand before thee, in dismay,
  Thou prince of poets, wordless to express
The reverence and honor I would pay
  To thy fair Muse's burning loveliness.
The thoughts my heart would speak I cannot say,
  Save this: — I would not have one poem less.

THE GARDENER SINGS

After Rabindranath Tagore

I. Love's Search.
II. Love's Response.
III. Love's Self-denial.
IV. Love's Art.
V. Love's Song.
VI. Love's Faithfulness.
VII. Love's Dream.
VIII. Love's Farewell.
IX. Love's "Good-night."

I

LOVE'S SEARCH

On many a quest you hastened to seek and oh! to find
The heart of her the fairest, the voice with sweet words kind,
The lips with kisses waiting, the eyes with love-tears blind.

"Where is she?" all your question, "where waits she now for me?
"For that she does I know full well and waits all eagerly,
"Till I shall come to greet her and break her revery."

But ah! you did not mark me, nor see my weary strain,
Though my lips flushed red with welcome and bitter tears like rain
Poured down my cheeks that waited your greeting kiss in vain.

Alas! I dared not tell you, though eager your first cry,
When tired after searching you rode me quickly by,—
My beauty yours for claiming,— that she, dear one, is I.

II

LOVE'S RESPONSE

You know my step, dear one, and that right well;
For as I came I saw the sweet blush swell
And rise up to your brow the tale to tell.

And why not? when it echoes but the beat
Of your heart's rhythm, slow or passion-fleet,
Swift but to reach you, slow but to retreat.

You know my voice; and why not? when its tone
Finds but its key-note in your very own;
Answers in harmony to yours alone.

You know my thoughts ere ever I may speak.
Why not? when like stray birds they turn to seek
In your dark eyes the nests they left last week.

III

LOVE'S SELF-DENIAL

'Tis deep, deep words my loving heart would say,
  But since it dare not,
With bitter jest I scatter them for ay,
And turn from you with laughing lips away,
  That you may share not
Nor see the pain embittering my day.

To speak true words to you my heart would fain,
  But does not dare;
Endure it could not all the ache and pain
Your unbelief would pour on it like rain;
  And so I swear
That truth is untruth, real is false and vain.

All-silent by you all-content to sit
  My heart would be;
But ah! it dare not; for in silence it
Would utter all the thoughts it deems most fit;
  So purposely
I chatter lightly for its benefit.

I'd flee from you, but yet I dare not so;
  For cowardice
Would brand itself upon me if I go
And you your power over me would know;
  So better 'tis
To stay and bear your sweetness and my woe.

IV

LOVE'S ART

You never say the word you would —
  Ah! tell me why!
Is it to blind me if you could,
  Lest haply I
Should read your heart?
I know, I know your art.

You never walk the path you would
  Lest I should prize
Some other just as you, so you elude
  My seeking eyes
And hide yourself apart.
I know, I know your art.

You never will take what you could,
  But more you'd claim;
And so my gifts aside are strewed;
  I do not blame.
Your silence shows your heart.
I know, I know your art.

V

LOVE'S SONG

Our merely loving, oh, so simple sweet!
  As simple as a song
  That flows along
In melody so quaint, yet so complete
  That surely all must know
  Its tuneful flow.

No mystery therein, nor any pain;
Nor cause for fear or fret,
But freedom from regret
That strives not to recall the past again,
But living in today
Finds joy alway.
No shadow there to dim the perfect charm,
But deep and full content
With rapture blent,
And perfect confidence that nought can harm;
That none can ever mar
Such joys as are
In our sweet love, our love so like a song.

VI

LOVE'S FAITHFULNESS

When Paris dreamed of Helen
By far Scamander's side,
I, too, dreamed in my tent,
Near that stream's flowing tide;
Nor were my dreams of conquest,
But of your love denied.

Beneath the starry heavens
In Gaul with Cæsar's host,
I pitched my tent for conquest;
But ah! my dreams were most
Of you in Rome uncaring,
And of your love long-lost.

Of knights the very humblest
In Arthur's train I went,
For love of you and chivalry
On many a tourney bent;
But you — you passed unheeding
My heart's supreme intent.

Through ages I have wooed you,
Through ages been denied;
In Rome, in Troy, in England,
My heart has sought your side;
And yet today you mock me
Just as of old in pride.

Mayhap in some dim future
Again we two may meet;
Mayhap some power within me
Will rise to action fleet
To woo and ah! to win you.
Till then I'll hope on, sweet.

VII

LOVE'S DREAM

Dear heart, I dream of you
The whole night through;
In endless dreams you pass my garden by,
The garden of my heart, that here doth lie
Waiting but for your coming,
Like swift birds homing; —
And yet you come not in my lonesome dream.

But when the last day finds my garden dust;
When all that ever grew therein needs must
  Die and depart
  From that garden of my heart:
Still all my dreams will deathless be of you,
God's ages through;
Then pray that you may come in that last dream!

VIII

LOVE'S FAREWELL

If you would have it so,
  I will end my singing;
If you bid me, I will go,
  Since your heart, up-springing,
Bids you answer my call low,
  And you'd fain be winging
Your far flight away,— since, lo! —
  You care not for my singing.

If it trouble you, my dear,
  In your flower-weaving,
Just my passing step to hear,
  Though 'tis past believing,
I will pass no longer here,
  Go my way with grieving; —
But,— and let me say it clear —
  Would I were not leaving!

If it makes your heart throb wild,
At the sound of my oar's beating,
To your whim quite reconciled,
Even gay, retreating,
I will row by yon bank, child,
Nor cast one glance, swift-fleeting.—
Would that you might be beguiled
To wave me one last greeting.

IX

LOVE'S "GOOD-NIGHT"

The last song sung, love, let us say, "Good night";
Forget the pain, when dawn has put to flight
The dreams we strive in vain to clasp and keep.—
Good night, dear heart, so sleep!

The last word spoken, love, our day is o'er;
All emptiness where bliss had been before;
And in my heart a throbbing pain and deep.—
Good night, dear heart, so sleep!

But when the last long sleep of death draws nigh,
And all life's little dreams have drifted by;
Glad in the dawn of that immortal light
No more we'll say, "Good night."

TO A. R. SINGING

Ah! sing again that song! Its cadence sweet,
Its melody in ling'ring pathos true,
Brings back such visions as you seem to view
While from your lips each note falls. Ah! repeat
"The songs my mother taught me." All-complete
The memory, as each note pulses through
My own heart's longing swift to answer you
And thrill in turn to each note's pulsing beat.

The other songs you sang, some sad, some gay,
Struck other chords within my waiting heart,
As glad and buoyant as the "Love in May";
But none will ever stand supreme, apart,
As that; and in my dreams tonight I'll hear
That melody and your voice soaring clear.

A BIRTHDAY SONNET

To Mrs. H. G. T.

The dearest title I can give to you,
  As this page comes my greetings glad to bear,
  Is friend, and I would wish you a full share
Of joy and happiness the whole year through;
Not sweets I send as other friends may do,
  Nor messages with fragrant roses rare;
  And my poor greeting I can hardly dare
To match with theirs, although my love is true.

But still I dare, for nought else can I give,
  Since all the giving is from you to me;
I only hope that I may worthy live
  Of all your friendly kindness given free;
Each little, nameless, unremembered thought
Which to my life such happiness has brought.

BEAUTY

A wistful loneliness that beauty stirred
  Within my heart, the glow of evening sky
  That bloomed so fair and yet so swift to die,
As the sad gray of night-time dimly blurred
All the far landscape; and I faintly heard,
  Or dreamed I heard, your half unconscious sigh
  That beauty such as this should pass you by
And your heart fail to speak some fitting word.

Beauty of sight, of sound, brings tears unless
Shared with another; hearts needs must express
Some of the painful throb and pulsing beat
Stirred by the spell, and speaking make complete
All the glad harmony, the mystic bond
That binds our hearts to the Great Source beyond.

NIGHT-SCENE

Against the sky gray branches as a frame
  For the unfading fire of one bright perfect star,
  And all the sky a-silver with the far
All-heaven-encircling moonlight; — a mere name
Is beauty, when compared with this; a shame
  Even to seek to find such words as are
  Worthy to tell the glory; words but mar
Beauty in telling; silence here has claim.

Silence but filled with thoughts that throng within,
  Aye, deep within our hearts, whene'er we see
Such splendor in the sky; or when the din
  Of ocean-surge beats deep in harmony.
His handiwork the heavens then declare;
And oh! the glory of the Lord is there.

LUNA

Shining through a luminous white cloud shaped like an eagle with outstretched wings, the moon, and one bright star above.

One moment only didst thou shine thus fair,
O'ershadowed by a gleaming eagle bright,
Whose outstretched wings of misty clouds so white
Dimmed but one moment thine own brightness rare;
And over thee, fair Luna, steadfast there
Shining with clear, unfading, silver light,
One star alone, of all the stars of night
That could its brightness with thine own compare.

One moment, and Jove's minister had sped
Away, perchance, to greet the morning sun;
Never a cloud to dim thy radiance clear; —
Never a star bright-shining, save o'erhead,
Where steadfast still was seen that fulgent one,
Heralding thee night's queen without a peer.

NIGHT AT SEA

Eight bells! To bed, to rest!
While clear and peaceful in the west
The evening star that shines on home
Is shining on us, as we roam.

Good night, sweet star, and may the peace
Of star-light fill our dreams no less
Here on the sea than when at home,
Star shining on us as we roam.

THE TREE

Your golden leaves lie scattered at my feet;
  Against the sky
All bare and stark your straining branches toss,
  As if on high
You'd raise your cry of anguish at your loss;
  Mere mortal I
To share your sorrow am, alas! not meet.

And yet it was no loss, a gift instead
  Of precious gold,
For Mother Earth a wondrous coverlet
  Lest winter's cold
Should touch her with its blighting chill and wet;
  So fold on fold
With golden leaves you strewed her sun-warmed
    bed.

All that you had you gave. Oh, noble tree!
  Have I the right
To make of it a flaming incense-fire
  For my delight?
Or for the serving of some mad desire
  To set alight
That golden store and burn it recklessly?

And yet a child of Earth, I claim it mine
  To use at will.
As children of the Earth, both you and I,
  We must fulfil
Our fate-appointed task and destiny,
  Each year, until
You crumble to the earth; I soar divine.

AUTUMN

Of old I sang the songs that youth sings best,
The songs of love, of joy, of gladsome spring;
But now a different music would I sing,
Though not less sweet, less full of tuneful zest;
I'd sing the glowing, sunlight-tinted west,
The mellowing season, birds upon the wing
Migrating southward, and the fields that bring
Their yellow wealth earth's bounty to attest.

Oh! that I had the artist's brush to paint
The gold and scarlet, bronze and green array
In which the trees, now marshalled forth, acquaint
The world that Autumn passes on her way,
With regal splendor and in solemn state,
Queen of the earth on whom the months all wait.

WINTER-GRAY

All gray the day and sunless, and my mood
    All gray and joyless, cold.
Why is it that the stillness of the wood
    Doth also me enfold?
The icy chill of snow-clad, sighing trees
    Strikes deep within my heart;
And every little, rustling, quiv'ring breeze
    Seems as it were a part
Of some sad moan that Winter fain would make
    To tell me of her woe,
To weave her spell that I for her dear sake
    Might deeply, truly know
And tell it clearly to the world again;
    And so all sombre gray
She wove for me instead this mood of pain
    To bear her own away.

All gray the day and sunless, but my mood
    Will gladder grow full-soon;
For in the quiet of the winter wood
    A bird sang clear at noon.

LULLABY

Dost know, little one, dost know,
That over the stars the angels play
In a mystic dance, now slow, now gay,
Keeping watch the while over us below?
Dost know, little one, dost know?

Hast heard, little one, hast heard
The song of the angels fair and bright,
As they hover above us through the night,
The song that the Bethlehem shepherds stirred?
Hast heard, little one, hast heard?

I know, little one, I know;
For angels bright through my dreams once strayed,
While in starry meadows they lightly played,
And my heart was healed of its wakeful woe.
I know, little one, I know.

Then rest, little one, then rest;
For angel-guardians still will keep
Their watch above us, while wrapped in sleep,
God's messengers so glad and blest.
Then rest, little one, then rest.

THE RIDE

Rush along,— swift,— sure.
Mile after mile in the star-lit night;
Oh, the sweet allure
Of the mile ahead, in our swift-run flight!
But more secure
At the journey's end the dear home-light.—
Mile after mile in the night.

See the stars how bright!
Mile after mile by the side of my love;
But the clear star-light
Shining steadily on in the skies above
Sees no sweet delight
More fair than the home of my treasure-trove.—
Mile after mile with my love.

And the homes we see,—
Mile after mile as we go on our way.
Love's loyalty be
The light that shines in them there for ay.
None so fair for me
As the dear home that waits at the end of the day.
Mile after mile ends our way.

THE HINDU SINGER

Tense silence as the strange half-minor notes
Plaintively sing;
The dream-filled smell of incense;
Bright carmine of the poinsettias and the green
Of velvet curtains round about her;
Brilliant the light straight falling
Upon her jewelled fingers
And upon the lute
With fretted strings of gold,—
The lute quivering with those half-sounds
Like hearts in pain,
Like hearts in memory crooning
Over the days — long-gone — of love, of joy,
But most of all, of sorrow.
And above it all
The piercing, calling wail
Of her voice singing —
Singing or dreaming — which?
And oh! the song!

HINDU LAMENT

The jasmine blooms in my courtyard,
For spring is here;
But my heart for thy love is lamenting,
And sad and drear
I wait for some message from thee;
None comes to me.

The scent of the jasmine blossoms
Perfumes the air;
But my heart's sweet fragrance is wasted;
I do not care
To smell of the sweetness alone,
Now thou art gone.

The rain on the jasmine blossoms
Shines bright and clear;
Like rain on thy head I'd be,
My Rajah dear;
Or a cloud to hover above thee;
So do I love thee.

WAITING

The sun shines straight across the plain,
As it sinks in the splendid west;
My thoughts fly true to your heart, Elaine,
As I go to rest.
For the sun, I know,
With its golden glow,
Gives promise of day again.
But ah! for me
What the morrow may be
I cannot tell, Elaine.

The stream flows on to the ocean deep,
And it sings a happy strain;
For it knows full well that rest and sleep
'Twill find therein, Elaine.
My love would find
In your heart as kind
A haven wherein to dwell.
But what may be
The welcome for me,
Elaine dear, will you tell?

UNFINISHED THOUGHTS

Unfinished thoughts, I fain would gather you
  Into a perfect whole, but you elude
  My spirit's grasp, though long and deep I brood,
Waiting perchance if only one or two
May still return, as homing pigeons do,
  Hoping in this calm, peaceful solitude,
  Cares cast aside and each disturbing mood,
All these fair thoughts at last to ponder through.

Unfinished thoughts, aye, fair and wise they seem,
Dim like the glories of a vanished dream;
Glory and love and fame within their ken,
They wait the hour of utterance. Ah, when?
Here in the quiet cloister I will wait;
Only such silence can unbar thought's gate.

SOUNDS

I sit in my quiet watch-tower
Hour by hour;
And what do I hear?
Only once in a while can I hear the sound of the wind
As it tosses the curtains, whispering through the blind;
The ring of steel on steel
As a new-made wheel
Is forced on the axle, blow following swift on blow; —
Clang of the iron on the forge; now the clanking of chains
As the ice-wagon rushes up with its ice-bound rains;
The saw grating harsh on the ice;
And then in a trice
The call of the ice-man loud;
Now a little crowd
Of maidens playing a game
Whose old-loved name
Takes me back to the days when I romped too,
As merry and gay
As they;
Now the stroke of the town-clock, count it slow,— one,— two,—
Three,— four,— how slow it goes
Till eleven, the close;
And I think of the day half-done
Which seemed just begun;

Hear the call of the hen and the hum of the locust
shrill;
The patter of hoofs rushing by,— and nearer still
The intimate talk of friends on the lawn is heard;
Now the bark of a dog and the song of a gilt-caged
bird.

All these, as I sit here quiet in my lone watch-tower,
Listening, hour by hour.

And all seem so busy and gay,
These sounds of the town;
Would that I, as they,
Were down
Working glad in their midst, making my own voice
heard, too.
Let me leave my watch-tower,— swift,— there is
work to do.

THE PATH OF THE STORM

Higher and higher
In mad desire,
Wind of the storm-blast, rise!
Sing to the North
As you fare forth,
That the end of your journey lies
Where the Storm-king waits
At his castle gates
For the sound of your warlike cries.

Haste, then, oh, haste
O'er the rain-swept waste
In your chariot-clouds away!
With triumphant song
Sweep the heights along,
Nor for gods nor mortals stay!
For the powers of earth
Are nothing worth
To check your wild affray.

Then shout and sing
To your mighty king,
While my heart is thrilled to hear!
I fain would be
Of your company,
Ye winds without a peer.
When your battle-song
Rises loud and strong
My heart is a wild Valkyr.

THE STORM WINDS

What would ye, winds, that loud and long ye blow
  And rush in concourse mad along the sky?
  Is it to some great carnival ye hie,
In palace vast of ice and gleaming snow?
Is it to find some cavern, dark and low,
  Where ye may rest, your journey done, to lie
  At ease and leave the over-arching sky
Cloudless and tranquil? Tell me where ye go!

Here but a moment since,— now miles away,
  While still I hear the thunder of your feet;
And still a flurry white marks your affray;
  While still the trees are bent by your retreat;
Shouting, triumphant, go ye on your way;
My heart would follow swift; but whither? Say!

THE VIKING-MAID

Oh, a heart as wild as the wildest sea
  Was born in me long ago,
When a Viking-maid, so bold and free,
I roamed over meadow and forest and lea,
With never a care in the world for me,—
  A Viking of long ago.

But it died one night and slept away
  The centuries until now;
And now it beats in a different way,
Though once and again it longs to stray
And roam like a Viking, as today.
  Those days come back to me now.

SPRING RAIN

Oh, patter wild rain
'Gainst my window-pane!
And sigh, sad breeze,
Through the tall pine-trees!
But my heart says " Nay,"
To the dreary day; —
For my heart is singing of love.

Oh, frown and lower,
With many a shower,
Gray clouds wind-tossed,
Like a spirit lost!
I do not care,
Be ye gray or fair; —
For my heart is singing of love.

THE SONG

When chill without the snowflakes fall so purely,
And warm within the firelight flames securely,
Ah, then, dear heart, I know full well and surely,
I love you.

Or when the fields are green with April's springing,
And happy birds are hitherward swift winging,
My heart too their glad song is blithely singing,
I love you.

CHANSON

Oh, my heart is singing so loud I'm sure you must
hear
Its gay lilting melody tuned to the song of the wind,
Tuned to the rustling song of the murmuring
breeze,
And the frolicsome dance of the sunbeams through
goldening leaves,
And the scurrying, flurrying charge of the clouds
as they rush
To meet the bright Sun-god swift riding across the
blue skies.
Oh, the wind it may sing of its battles, the breezes
of heaven,
The sunbeams may sing of the summer, the clouds
sing of rain,
The birds sing of daffodils swaying in riotous glee,
The trees in their singing sound forth a joyous re-
frain.
But the song of my heart is the sweetest, oh, listen,
oh, hear!
For the song of my heart is the love that it gives
you, my dear.

DE AMICITIA

REFLECTIONS OF CICERO'S ESSAY

I. Laelius Speaks
II. Friendship
III. The Search

I

LAELIUS SPEAKS

He was my friend, what need of more to say?
What greater name could I on him bestow?
Whose memory, all golden-bright, doth glow
Within my heart to cheer the weary day;
For sad indeed were life with him away,
Did I not surely, confidently know
That soon I, too, would join him; happy so
A little longer in this world to stay.

Ah, he was greater far than I, yet deigned
To share with me his greatness, loving me;
Bestowing all upon me, unrestrained;
And living, loving, planning mutually,
The glory of true friendship well we knew.
And may the gods grant one such friend to you.

II

FRIENDSHIP

You looked on me and straightway then I knew
In that one glance a signal flashed, full-bright,
A spark electric, swift to set alight
Within my eyes a message clear to you;
You looked on me and like a magnet drew
My glance to rush to yours, in eager flight;
Surely I could not fail to read aright
And pledge my love in answer clear and true.

Thus do real friends each other strangely find,
Just as I found you, without word or speech;
For such companionship of heart and mind
Brings the content of trusting each in each;
Never a doubt to mar nor troubled thought;
Oneness of sympathy has friendship wrought.

III

THE SEARCH

Up and down through the world I go
Seeking, with all my heart aglow.
Where shall I find
What I have in mind,
When I do not know
If the gods bestow,
Or some mad Fate
Rules love and hate?
Tell me, where shall I find?

To and fro through the world I went,
Ever upon my quest intent.
And what did I find?
How strangely kind
Is the Fate's decree,
For you and me!
For the kind Fate brought
What I had sought;
And I had no need to find.

A friend I sought as I went my way;
Nor any sign had I to say
How I might prove
His worth or love.
But with never a doubt
I chose him out,
As the Fate one day
Led him my way.
And his love I need not prove.

Wholly content I now rejoice,
Though Fate decreed my unwitting choice;
Full well I know
That the gods bestow
The gift of a friend;
But they only send
To those who yearn
To be kind in turn;
Be a friend, have a friend, you know.

THE GREATEST OF THESE

" Whoever lives true life will love true love "

It cannot be unless your life shines true
And steady as the burning Northern star,
Unless your faith is strong enough to bar
All unbelief and doubt from testing you;
Unless you are of those, the happy few,
Whose hope illumines the dark future, far
Discerning things which seem from those which are,
Whose pleasure is to will and then to do;

It cannot be, unless you have all these,
Truth, faith, and hope to guide you on your way,
That love, the greatest of life's verities,
Will touch you with its golden, guiding ray;
To shine upon your life, to heal and bless,
To crown you with its perfect happiness.

EVEN-SONG

" Bless those whose hearts are knit to ours in love,"
Our Vesper prayer to Thee, great God, above,
" And those who unto us have done aught wrong,"
At even-song.

" Grant that the hearts that lift this prayer to Thee
May undefiled and humble ever be;
In them wilt Thou, O Lord, at even-song
Forgive the wrong."

THE VISION

Why should I care that others fail to see
  The vision that I see and so judge ill
  The things I do, speaking the harsh word, till
My eyes are blurred with tears that they should be
So blind, poor ones, as all-unwittingly
  By their dull scorn to spur me on, until
  My heart feels stronger, eager to fulfil,
To meet its heaven-granted destiny.

They had not scorned me, did they really know
  The glory of the vision,— foolish they!
Stumbling and halting on their path so low,
  While free among the stars I sing my way,
Careless of what they think, if only true
And clear my vision leads me on to do.

INSPIRATION

'Tis good just to feel the blood tingle swift and glad,
As the long thoughts urge,
With a pulsing surge,
To meet the task that the day brings. Oh! that I had
A thousand days like this!
How often I miss
Just this magic flame of ambition, ardent, bright,
To kindle with fire
The heart's desire
To meet the work of the day with my utmost might!

The course, aye, long; but the banner's beckoning gleam
At the waiting goal
Spurs thee on, my soul;
While all the thoughts that men have dared to dream
Are thine to seize,
All earth's mysteries
Of knowledge, of hope, of faith, and of brave good cheer.
Live gladly then,
Lest ne'er again
This thrill and impulse to action strong appear.

DUTY

"The end of man is an action and not a thought."
Carlyle.

Not in the quiet cloister,
Though thy thoughts reach up to God,
But out in the world of action,
Where the Son of Man has trod
The path of truth and beauty,
Fulfilling His whole duty.

Not thought alone thy portion
Though noble and high it be;
Thine 'tis to toil and wrestle,
Although in Gethsemane,
With Him the sonship sharing
In doing and in daring.

Fare forth then to the battle!
Be brave to essay the strife.
Follow His royal banner,
And win the crown of life.
Doing thy appointed duty,
Make a path of truth and beauty.

THE CITADEL

"Ideals are the flaming ramparts of the soul"

A citadel thou dwellest in, my soul,
Flung round with ramparts tall;
Four-square its walls and four the towers strong,
Lest danger thee befall.

One tower strong is faith, one tower, hope,
And one is earnest will,
The fourth is love; protectingly they stand
To guard thee from all ill.

The firm ideals of loyalty and truth
There shine with steadfast light;
And justice true and mercy flame afar
To keep thee in the right.

For just as fair Brunhilde was, of old,
With magic fire pure,
Guarded by Wotan from all earthly taint,
So dost thou, too, secure

Such safety from those blazing rampart fires,
Those guardians of thy peace,
That never through the years before thee still
Shall their protection cease.

WORSHIP

As our song rose to God through the fretted roof,
So thine, little bird, through the branching trees;
And where, canst tell? shall we find the proof
That thy song was poorer, that ours did please
The God of us all, more sweet than thine?
For thy whole heart in thy song went forth
To pour all its joy at God's great world-shrine.
Was that gift of joy of lesser worth
Than our weak song with world-thoughts dim,
With world-care marring its melody,
Mere lip-praise giving, alas! to Him
Who gave to us love and joy so free?

Ah, restless heart, if cathedral-spire,
If organ-tone and vaulted aisle,
Avail not to raise thy spirit higher,
Then fare thee forth to the woods awhile,
And learn of the birds the true joy-song,
The spirit of worship, bestowing all
Unto God, to whom thou, too, dost belong,
And answer all self-forgetful His call
To service, to duty, to thankful prayer,
To loving communion, e'en face to face,
And worship the God who dwelleth there,
Regardless of time, of manner, of place,
Beholding alone the spirit of those
Who come to meet Him, in prayer and praise;
And freely His blessing He bestows
Alike on men, who their anthems raise,
And on woodland birds, who sing all gay,
His praise in forest and field today.

THE POET'S APOLOGY

Things new and old, things common and things strange,
Have met your notice, yet none quite like this:
A little would-be poet, whom I wis
You scarce would know, so do the swift years change
The things familiar, known at closer range,
For those made dim by distance. Aye, it is
So wonderful that from the child we miss
Should grow that which we do not know. Exchange
The present for the past, where would you be?
What would you have, that you should be content
With all the past's gay, happy poesy,
Nor deign to heed such humble voices sent
With other message? Let me pray your grace
To grant to these my songs one little place.

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